

## Press Room



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### **Spike Your Holiday Party With Alcohol-Free Fun**

December is California's Drunk and Drugged Driving (3D) Prevention Month

**Sacramento, Calif.**—The holidays are upon us and 'tis the season to be jolly'. From Thanksgiving to New Years Eve, family, friends and co-workers will gather together to eat, drink and be merry. But if those dear to you have been consuming alcoholic beverages, they are in serious danger once they get behind the wheel to drive home. And they're putting millions of California motorists at risk too.

The Office of Traffic Safety (OTS), California Highway Patrol (CHP) and California Restaurant Association (CRA) want to remind Californian's to celebrate safely at upcoming family and office parties by designating a sober driver and making sure to always wear a seat belt, every time you take a ride.

"California restaurants and bars welcome holiday parties and gatherings this time of year," said John Dunlap, CRA president and CEO. "We all want our guests to have a wonderful time and know, that to be a truly excellent host, the safety of our guests must be top of mind." Whether you are the manager of a five star restaurant or the host of a party in your own home, it is imperative that your guests do not end up in the back of a patrol car or, much worse, in an alcohol-related collision.

Last year in California 1,416 people were killed and more than 32,000 were injured in alcohol-involved collisions. Additionally 179,663 arrests were made in 2002 for impaired driving.

This month alone, more than 310 local law enforcement agencies, and the CHP, will saturate the state with sobriety checkpoints and DUI patrols. "We're making sure law enforcement have the resources they need in terms of staffing and equipment to do their job," said Sunne Wright McPeak, Secretary of the California Business, Transportation & Housing Agency. "The only way to really prevent impaired driving is to see that a friend or loved one who has been drinking doesn't get behind the wheel of a car in the first place."

There's no need to put a damper on holiday festivities for those guests who aren't drinking. The OTS, CHP and CRA suggest the following tips for safe and fun holiday celebrations:

- When greeting your guests, find out who the designated drivers are. Collect car keys from the others and start a money collection at the door for a taxi fund.
- Have a special bar for designated drivers at your holiday gathering where guests can create their own “mocktails”. Stock it with non-alcoholic drink mixers, including a variety of fruit juices, lemon-lime and club soda, non-alcoholic champagne and fun garnishes (maraschino cherries, fresh sprigs of mint, whipped cream, candy canes, cinnamon sticks, etc). Don’t forget the festive stemware and flavored sugars for the rim.
- Develop your own ‘signature’ non-alcoholic drink or borrow one of ours. Something red, using cranberry or cherry juice is always festive. We especially like the black cherry champagne served in a tall champagne flute.
- Have a contest for the best non-alcoholic drink, with your guests as the judges. Award the winner with a bottle of non-alcoholic champagne.
- Serve plenty of great hors d’oeuvres or try a festive sorbet served in a martini glass. With so many fabulous treats to taste, guests won’t be tempted to head straight for the bar.
- Plan activities to keep guests entertained. Great music, dancing, caroling or gift exchanges will make spirits bright, even without alcohol.
- Do not have an “open bar.” Have a trusted friend act as a bartender and pour appropriately. For more information regarding California’s 3D Month campaign, please visit [www.ots.ca.gov](http://www.ots.ca.gov).

\*Statistics based on California Highway Patrol 2002 provisional data. DUI arrests data provided by the Department of Justice, Bureau of Criminal Statistics.